

WAAK-UP

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classrooms for two weeks.

While there are no figures on exactly how many children participated in the boycott, Lewis said the district, which received \$3600.00 in federal funding per year, per child, saw it was a resource issue. She credits school district superintendent, Brian Cram, for his efforts towards compromise. Following the boycott, WAAK-UP presented the Prime 6 proposal which Cram refined and presented to the school board for approval.

The efforts came to a ceremonial climax during the Oct. 8 opening of H.P. Fitzgerald Elementary School. The school which is the first to be developed in the West Las Vegas area in nearly a quarter century, is a living tribute to a prominent African American educator as well as the consolidated efforts of WAAK-UP and the community.

While the Prime 6 program is fully operational, there are aspects which Lewis and Jackson said need further refinement. These aspects vary between racial insensitivity on behalf of teachers at prime 6 schools and inadequate facilities and instructional materials. Lewis said WAAK-UP also intends to expand the initiative to include 4th and 5th graders. "We're looking at bringing our 4th and 5th graders back to the community," said Lewis. She said the district has been cooperative, but due to educational cutbacks made by Governor Bob Miller's administration, the process has stilled.

Among other problems which have been highlighted, are severe disciplinary problems with students of Prime 6 schools. Lewis said, "The primary reason why these students are experiencing problems is because of their unfamiliarity with each other." According to Lewis, these students are experiencing a 'culture shock' due to their lack of understanding and lack of sensitivity towards each other. For so long the African American youths have been in the minority category in district classrooms, with the Prime 6 initiative, these children have been increased to the majority. The problems include disruptive behavior and fighting, both black-on-black and white-on-black.

Both Lewis and Jackson said the community is responsible for remedying this problem. They said the parental support and involvement through organizations like the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), children are provided with a solid foundation to base good behavior. Currently, a major goal of WAAK-UP is to encourage and develop parental participation. Another goal is to bring all Prime 6 schools to standard with other district schools.

"Madison 6th Grade Center

is dilapidated beyond repair, and requires rebuilding," said Lewis. "Libraries and other administrative facilities must be comparable to other schools," said Jackson.

District Prime 6 Liaison, Lawrence Weekly echoes some sentiments of WAAK-UP. He said Prime 6's impetus came from the WAAK-UP organization who saw the need for a culturally familiar learning environment. He also recognizes school superintendent Brian Cram for his contributions. "It's a cross section of those who should be credited," said Weekly. When asked about the progress of the Prime 6 initiative, Weekly says it has been significant, yet varied. "From some of the

schools we're getting excellent participation, yet from others we're getting none," Weekly said. He said the district is currently developing a strategic plan to institute parental involvement.

Weekly said the district also has multi-cultural training and sensitivity courses which it makes available. "We must have adequate training for teachers who do not have a multi-cultural background," said Weekly. When questioned about allegations of culture shock by some students and teachers of Prime 6 schools, Weekly confirmed he has heard of some incidents, but could not provide specifics. "I've heard, but cannot confirm any incidents of culture shock," said Weekly.

RAMADAN

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the study and research and solidarity international for human rights.

This year's theme, "Islam and the West: Cooperation not Confrontation" focused on issues affecting the United States, the West, the international Muslim community relations.

With the recent signing of the Israeli, Palestine peace accord, there is a renewed desire by many Muslim, non-Muslims and political leaders in the United States and abroad for improved economic and political ties.

This conference focused on how to accomplish these goals.

Other speakers at the conference included Dr. Sulyman Nyang of Howard University, Dr. John Esposito: Georgetown University and author of "The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality"; Dr. Yvonne Haddad, professor, Amherst College; Dr. Clouis Maksoud, American University;

Dr. Kamal Abdul-Majeed, former Information Minister of Egypt; Dr. Iyaz Gilani, Senior Consultant to Pakistan Prime Minister, and representatives from the media.

Topics of discussion included "Islamic Political Structure and Function", "The Western Media", "Critique and Response", "Human Rights and Liberties", and "An Islamic Perspective".

Mr. Ramadan stated, "I am encouraged and optimistic regarding the climate resulting from the declaration between Israel and Palestine and it's impact on improving the interrelation with our nation (US), our allies and the international Muslim community."

We are firmly committed to this improved linkage and the participation of the indigenous Muslim American community in it's development. I am honored and humbled to have the opportunity to lend my assistance through this conference."



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